



NAVY HISTORY MATTERS

April 28, 2020



Compiled by LCDR Dan Day, Naval History and Heritage Command's Communication and Outreach Division

Welcome to Navy History Matters—our weekly compilation of articles, commentaries, and blogs related to history and heritage. Every week we'll gather the top-interest items from a variety of media and social media sources and then link you to related content at NHHC's website (history.navy.mil), your authoritative source for Navy history.

★ “Like a Jockey Riding a Horse”: Kamikaze Attack on USS *Isherwood*

This week, as we continue to look back 75 years ago to the [Battle of Okinawa](#), NHHC published a new essay on the destroyer [USS *Isherwood* \(DD-520\)](#). A veteran of 14 island invasions, *Isherwood* arrived off Okinawa on March 26, 1945. She actively participated in the initial pre-landing bombardments off Kerama Retto, remaining on station as troops from the Tenth Army stormed ashore on April 1 in the biggest amphibious assault of the Pacific War. Two days later, *Isherwood* steamed with minesweeper [Swallow \(AM-65\)](#) and landing support craft LCS(L)(3)-15 to a position off the beaches of Ie Shima to provide fire support for ground forces fighting their way inland. The destroyer remained in this role until April 16, after receiving orders to help fellow destroyers [Pringle \(DD-477\)](#) and [Laffey \(DD-724\)](#) off Ie Shima, both of which had been struck by kamikazes. For more, [read the essay](#) by NHHC historian Guy Nasuti.



Photo Link: https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/alphabetical---donations0/b/s-100-h-002-kamikaze-attack/_jcr_content/mediaitem/image.img.jpg/1582811006195.jpg

★ “I Still Remember the Shipmates Who Didn’t Survive”: The Destruction of USS *Pringle*

After staging off Ulithi for the upcoming invasion of Okinawa, destroyer [Pringle \(DD-477\)](#) weighed anchor on March 27, 1945. Joining the screen for Transport Group Baker, she arrived off Okinawa on the morning of April 1 and assumed screening duties while troops of the Tenth Army landed at their assigned beaches. After spending April 6–13 performing escort duties, *Pringle* received orders to Picket Station No. 14 on April 14, steaming to approximately 70 miles northwest of Motobu Peninsula Okinawa. The picket stations were extremely hazardous, as the inexperienced kamikaze pilots often targeted the first U.S. ships found, usually a destroyer stationed out beyond the safety of the fleet to warn of incoming air attacks. Read more about the Sailors onboard *Pringle* in an [essay by NHHC Historian Guy Nasuti](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nhhc-series/nh-series/19-N-48000/19-N-48619.html>

★ Honoring Museum Volunteers During National Volunteer Week

In honor of last week's Volunteer Recognition Week, several [NHHC museums](#) took to social media to say thank you for all that the volunteers do to share our naval history and heritage with the public. On April 20, 1974, President Richard Nixon established National Volunteer Week to offer appreciation for the great work of volunteers and call for more citizens to give back to their communities. In presidential proclamation 4288 Nixon stated, “I urge all Americans to observe that week by seeking out an area in their community in which they can give to a needy individual or a worthy cause by devoting a few hours, or more, each week to volunteer service.” [Read the blog](#) by MC3 Randy Adams at [The Sextant](#) to learn more about museum volunteers.



Photo Link: https://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/files/2020/04/F-14A_Pedestal-660x330.jpg

★ 60 Years Ago, A Submerged Submarine Circled the Globe for the First Time

In 1960, the U.S. Navy's [submarine force](#) conducted a landmark exercise in the history of submarine warfare. The nuclear-powered submarine [USS Triton \(SRN-586\)](#) circumnavigated the globe completely underwater, proving that submarines—which until then had spent much of their time on the surface—could now operate completely submerged. Operation Sandblast was the U.S. Navy's demonstration of the superiority of nuclear power. USS *Triton*, a nuclear-powered radar picket submarine, was at 447 feet long the largest submarine ever built at the time. Designed to sail to remote locations near the Soviet Union and use its radar to search for signs of nuclear attack, *Triton* was also the fastest submarine ever built. To learn more, [read the article](#) by Kyle Mizokami in *Popular Mechanics*.



Photo Link: https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/t/triton-v/jcr_content/body/media_asset_0/image.img.jpg/1397056351952.jpg

★ Blue Angels, Thunderbirds to Conduct Multi-City Flyovers

The Department of Defense [announced](#) that in a show of national solidarity, the [Navy Blue Angels](#) and the [Air Force Thunderbirds](#) will conduct a series of multi-city flyovers during the next two weeks. Dubbed Operation America Strong, the flyovers are a collaborative salute from the Navy and Air Force to recognize healthcare workers, first responders, and other essential personnel while standing in solidarity with all Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Blue Angels will mark their 74th anniversary in June. The [Navy Flight Exhibition Team](#), their formal title at the time, performed its first flight demonstration June 15, 1946, at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, FL. The team was first introduced with its now more commonly known name, Blue Angels, at an airshow in Omaha, NE, in July 1946. Right Wing Pilot Lieutenant Maurice “Wick” Wickendoll was inspired by a name he read in a New York magazine. Lieutenant Commander Roy “Butch” Voris, who led the team in a Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat, agreed with Wick, stating, “That sounds great! The Blue Angels. Navy, Blue, and Flying!” Learn more about the [history of the Blue Angels](#) at [NHHC’s website](#).



Photo Link: https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nhhc-series/nh-series/USN-1171000/USN-1171053/jcr_content/mediaitem/image.img.jpg/1459630258716.jpg

★ WWII @ 75: Medal of Honor

[Robert Eugene Bush](#) served as a hospital apprentice first class. On May 2, 1945, during the [Battle of Okinawa](#), he was a rifle company medical corpsman with the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, Fifth Marine Division. While attacking the enemy, a Marine fell wounded in a fire-swept location. Bush, who had been assisting other wounded Marines, went to the officer's exposed position and administered blood plasma amidst the perilous battle conditions. As the Japanese counterattacked, he courageously remained with the disabled officer, firing back with one hand while holding the plasma bottle in the other. Despite his own serious injuries, Bush continued to provide aid until his patient was evacuated. For his “conspicuous gallantry” on this occasion, President Harry S. Truman presented him with the [Medal of Honor](#) on October 5, 1945. Bush was the youngest World War II Navy Sailor to receive the Medal of Honor.



Photo Link: https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/us-people/b/bush-robert-e/80-g-701139/jcr_content/mediaitem/image.img.jpg/1436131004594.jpg

★ Aircraft Carrier Requirements and Strategies: 1977–2001

In a recent [naval history podcast](#) from Preble Hall, Dr. Ryan Peeks, historian with the Naval History and Heritage Command, discusses his research for an upcoming book on the development of U.S. aircraft carriers from 1977–2001. The [Preble Hall podcast](#), produced by personnel at the [U.S. Naval Academy Museum](#) in Annapolis, MD, interviews historians, practitioners, military personnel, and other experts on a variety of naval history topics from ancient history to more current events.



Photo Link: <https://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/files/2020/03/1970-035-0006.jpg>

★ Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Celebrated in May each year, Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month recognizes the challenges faced by Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Native Hawaiians and their vital contributions to the American story. The Department of Defense Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month posters are the third in a series of posters commemorating the 75th Anniversary of World War II. [Each poster](#) is reminiscent of the colors and styles found in the recruitment and victory posters from the World War II era. [Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders](#) of various nationalities and ancestry—Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Asian Indian, and Polynesian—have a rich legacy of service and sacrifice in the United States Navy dating back to the 19th century. Learn more about the contributions of these [notable Sailors](#) at [NHHC's website](#).

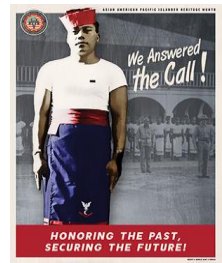


Photo Link: https://www.deomi.org/DownloadableFiles/humanRelations/images/POST-AAPIHM_V3-Home-202003231.jpg

★ NHHC Webpage of the Week

This week's Webpage of the Week is the [Good Conduct Medal page](#). April 26 marked the 151st anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Navy's Good Conduct Medal, originally called the Good Conduct Badge, which looked nothing like today's medal. First authorized on April 26, 1869, for "obedience, sobriety, and cleanliness" as well as proficiency in "gunnery and seamanship," the decoration came in the shape of a [Maltese Cross](#) of nickel, the center of which was rounded out by a medallion. In the 1880s, the Navy had the medal redesigned in the form of a bronze planchet that has stayed more or less the same for the last 135 years. Whereas the medal itself changed little after 1884, the criteria for receiving it shifted in response to a process of modernization underway since the end of the nineteenth century. Discover more about [decorations and awards](#) at [NHHC's website](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nhhc-series/nh-series/NH-123000/NH-123249.html>

★ Today in Naval History

On April 28, 1930, [Secretary of the Navy Charles Adams](#) appointed the first Curator of the Department of the Navy, [Dudley Knox](#). Knox had been heading the Office of Naval Records and Library and the Historical Section since 1921, and oversaw both for 25 years. The two offices merged under Knox in 1927. As part of an attempt to establish a national Navy museum, Adams asked on April 15, 1930, for an inventory of Navy and Marine Corps monuments and relics at stations across the country. Knox was appointed to coordinate the project as the Curator of the Navy Department. As Curator of the Navy Department, Knox also became responsible for collection and preservation of art objects, trophies, and relics of historical or inspirational value to the Navy. Today, the legacy continues with the Director of Naval History and Heritage Command serving as the Curator of the Navy. Learn about the [history of Naval History and Heritage Command](#) at [NHHC's website](#).



For more dates in naval history, including your selected span of dates, see [Year at a Glance](#) at [NHHC's website](#). Be sure to check this page regularly, as content is updated frequently.

Photo Link:

https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/research/library/research-guides/z-files/zb-files/zb-files-k/knox-dudley-w/_jcr_content/body/media_asset_2/image.img.jpg/1391038921551.jpg